

# Oil Installer

News and views from an evolving heating world



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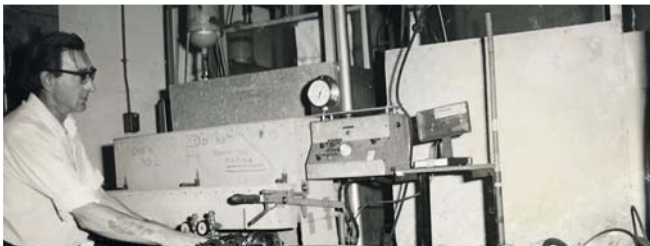
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## Two decades of technical achievement...

While it might seem as though changes in the oil heating sector are rare, the industry actually has a proud record of innovation and technical achievement. The last twenty years have seen many important developments, resulting in ever more efficient appliances, lower emissions and better, more flexible controls.



Our customers may not care, or even be aware, that the NOx emissions of their new boiler are half that of their previous model, but they certainly welcome lower bills and the ability to control their heating to suit their needs.

Meeting the requirements of both customers and legislators is vital and both look set to become ever more demanding. It's certainly no easy task solving the demands of the so-called energy trilemma – reducing our carbon emissions while securing energy supplies and keeping costs down.

Our industry is already responding with a range of innovations, from improvements in hot water management and system controls, to developments in combustion, hybrid solutions and the testing of low carbon liquid fuels.

For existing off-grid homes where oil heating is popular, the challenges are particularly severe. Only around 12% are in EPC bands A-C and few homeowners will wish (or can afford) to make the huge investment needed to bring them up to a standard where options such as heat pumps can be considered. For these homes, better loft insulation, a modern boiler and a switch to a low carbon liquid fuel may be the most cost-effective way to achieve a C-plus EPC rating and an acceptable fall in carbon emissions.

It's a message that OFTEC is taking to government and there are encouraging signs that they may be willing to listen. The challenge now is to demonstrate that we can supply these solutions and match our talk with deeds. I'm confident that our manufacturers can meet the technical challenges and we are seeing new developments on the fuel side virtually every week.

There's a long way to go, but good reason to be hopeful...

**Paul Rose**  
Chief Executive Officer

## New and updated FREE marketing leaflets...



OFTEC offers a range of free leaflets to help technicians win more business. The leaflets have been put together to provide homeowners with essential information about heating equipment and reassurance that they are choosing a competent and professional technician.

In producing the leaflets, OFTEC has recognised the fact that it can be challenging to convince a homeowner that it is worth paying a little more to have a job well done. We are optimistic that this extensive range of marketing material will go a long way to help registered technicians secure new business.

The range of leaflets includes topics such as:

- why your boiler should be serviced regularly
- workmanship warranty
- the dangers of carbon monoxide
- choosing a technician you can trust (which includes an area for you to add your company details)

A full list of the leaflets currently available can be found at: [www.oftec.org/consumers/consumer-home-guides](http://www.oftec.org/consumers/consumer-home-guides)

To obtain copies, email your requirements to: [marketing@oftec.org](mailto:marketing@oftec.org). These leaflets are available exclusively to OFTEC registered businesses so don't forget to include your company registration number.

## OFTEC on the road!

OFTEC has now completed a busy spring programme of trade events. The aim of the work has been two-fold: to promote our registration scheme to technicians and to highlight the potential of liquid fuels to support the government's decarbonisation agenda.

The events attended included the Installer Show in Coventry where, as well as exhibiting, OFTEC participated in a panel discussion on the future of heating, and the Hearth and Home and NACS shows, where we promoted our solid fuel registration scheme.

In June we also participated in a new regional seminar event in Exeter called Low Carbon Homes. This is designed to attract installers but also other stakeholders who may not normally attend trade shows, such as facilities managers, architects, specifiers, landlords and public and private sector housing managers.

The event provided a forum for some lively debate and more in the series are planned for Wales and Scotland later this year. For more information, visit the Low Carbon Homes website: [www.lowcarbonhomes.uk/](http://www.lowcarbonhomes.uk/)

For more information on forthcoming events, please contact Malcolm Farrow: [mfarrow@oftec.org](mailto:mfarrow@oftec.org)

# Clive King

## (4th July 1941 – 6th May 2018)

OFTEC and the wider heating industry were deeply saddened by the recent news of the sudden death of Clive King. Clive was taken ill towards the end of April and after a short spell in hospital sadly passed away on 6th May with his wife Jane and his two sons by his side.

Clive's funeral took place on 25th May at East Devon Crematorium which was well attended by his family, friends and many industry colleagues.

The family have requested that all generous donations go to Cancer Research UK via the undertakers M. Sillifant & Son, 19-20 Holloway Street, St Leonard's, Exeter EX2 4JD.

Clive was brought up in Streatham, South London and followed his dream of becoming an engineer by starting a five-year apprenticeship with Shell-Mex & BP in 1958. He moved to Devon in 1965 and became a domestic heating representative still working for Shell-Mex & BP. In 1975 Clive became an area sales manager for Boulter Boilers and operated all over the South West in all aspects of

the business from troubleshooting and training to sales and attending exhibitions.

Clive left Boulter in 1981 to work for Energycare Limited of Bristol as a regional sales manager and then as their general manager.

In October 1984 Clive started his own company called Energy Systems (Exeter) which specialised in oil heating, vaporising cookers and oil storage installation. Energy Systems became an OFTEC registered business in the early 2000's and had the business registration number of C89, an indication of their early involvement with the registration scheme.

During his time of running his own business Clive was elected chairman of the OFTEC registered technician forum in 2003 and contributed to shape the OFTEC registration scheme, technical reference books and training courses with his knowledge and experience of the industry.

In 2008 Clive decided to come off the tools and work for OFTEC as a



regional inspector for the South West of England. For the next six years Clive was on the road regularly visiting businesses and seeing registered technicians on-site. Over 1,350 inspection visits were undertaken on behalf of OFTEC and Clive was often the first point of contact should a technician have a query.

Clive called it a day on his inspecting duties in 2014 and whilst most would have dreamt of retirement Clive continued to work as a consultant and was a regular contributor to the *Oil Installer* magazine and other trade publications.

Clive's sudden death was a shock to us all. He will be fondly remembered as an enthusiastic contributor and thoroughly committed to his trade.

RIP Clive King.

## Compliance matters!

The goal of OFTEC is to maintain and improve installation and servicing standards in the heating industry, so we welcome reports of substandard work.



Registered technicians clearly share this concern and our compliance team now handles between 200 and 300 cases a year. It is often a registered technician who informs us of sub-standard work carried out by alleged incompetent technicians. This is because homeowners may not feel technically qualified to make the complaint or because they are fearful of repercussions from the original technician. In many cases the reporter will have been called in to service or repair an appliance that was not installed correctly in the first place. Any complaints, however, do need to have the householders' permission.

Where the poor workmanship has been

carried out by an OFTEC registered technician, our compliance team are able to take direct action. The technician will be asked to return to the property to put the work right (and provide evidence of this), and the frequency of inspections will be increased until the inspection team are satisfied that the standard of work is at a consistent level.

### Unsafe work...

In extreme cases a technician's registration may be suspended or even revoked if their work does not improve or the issues reported raise concerns over competence.

You can also report poor or unsafe work by non-

registered technicians by completing complaints form R578 which is available from the technician area of the OFTEC website.

This work is in addition to non-conformance issues that have been raised during routine inspections. These are often avoidable, so make sure you read our article on following the manufacturers' instructions on page 40.

Cases of logo misuse have also kept the team busy. This is a practice we are clamping down on and we have recently reviewed our procedure for dealing with these complaints. To date this year, we have approached 57 companies and already satisfactorily resolved 26 of the cases.

Often it is simply an oversight because their registration has lapsed, and the logo displayed on their van or website has not been removed. Most companies remedy the situation very quickly either by renewing their registration or removing the logo.

Unfortunately, there are a few companies that have never been registered, yet persistently display the OFTEC logo. These are reported to the Local Trading Standards Office who are then able to take legal action on our behalf.

If you spot another business claiming OFTEC registration and they are not listed on the OFTEC Find a Technician website please email us at [logo@oftec.org](mailto:logo@oftec.org).

# Government report backs OFTEC's concerns over value of RHI



OFTEC CEO Paul Rose

A damning new report on the effectiveness of the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) has endorsed OFTEC's long held concerns about the carbon reduction initiative.

The authoritative study, released recently by the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee (PAC), found the scheme failed to meet its objectives or provide value for the £23 billion expected cost to tax payers. The committee stated that the RHI 'simply does not work for households and businesses unable to pay the high upfront costs of renewable and low-carbon heating equipment'.

Since the domestic RHI first launched in April 2014, OFTEC has warned that take up of the scheme will remain low as most consumers simply can't afford the substantial initial cost of installing renewable heating systems which start at around £6,000\*.

The report findings reveal just 60,000 renewable heating technologies have been installed under the domestic RHI to date. This falls far short of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's (BEIS) 'wildly over optimistic' initial forecast

of 513,000 new systems by 2020. At the current rate of take up, the figures is more likely to be just 111,000 installations.

## Hassle factor...

The 'hassle factor' of installing renewable heating systems was also cited by the report as a further reason for poor take up, an issue which again, OFTEC has strongly highlighted.

Renewable technologies such as heat pumps often require extensive insulation and/or home improvements such as larger radiators or underfloor heating to work effectively. The report therefore concludes that consumers are likely to 'continue favouring natural gas and oil boilers, which remain relatively cheap, easy to install and continue to be extremely popular across country'.

As a result of low participation, BEIS has cut back spending on the RHI from its initial target of £47 billion to £23 billion and the scheme is now expected to make a significantly smaller contribution to the UK's renewable heat and carbon reduction obligations which have been cut by 65% and 44% respectively.

Commenting on the RHI

report findings, OFTEC CEO Paul Rose said: "The domestic RHI, in its current form, is not fit for purpose. As the PAC report clearly states, government has failed to understand what consumers want and the barriers to participation.

"Households urgently need access to more affordable and practical low carbon heating solutions. This is especially true for those living off-gas grid where properties tend to be older with the lowest EPC ratings and so are harder to treat. Incidences of fuel poverty are also higher in rural areas, making cost an even more crucial factor."

## Air pollution...

The report also highlighted that some RHI-funded installations actually contribute to air pollution. More than 28,000 biomass boilers we installed under the scheme to August 2017 at a cost of £861 million in payments. Yet these systems burn wood and produce smoke which can be damaging to air quality. Solid fuel appliances, which include wood burning stoves and biomass boilers, currently cause 38% of particulate pollution\*\*.

Rates of non-compliance were also said to be 'too

high' and the report claims BEIS 'has no estimate of the potential cost of participants gaming the RHI'.

Paul Rose concludes: "If the RHI is to continue post 2021, it must be radically overhauled. BEIS has already suggested the introduction of 'assignment of rights' to help tackle the issue of high upfront costs, whereby a third party would pay the installation costs of the technology in return for the RHI payments.

"This would be a positive step which could work for some households but we back the PAC's recommendation that this idea would need to be thoroughly tested before implementation with a clear strategy to manage risks.

"Any new revisions of the RHI should focus on providing the maximum benefit for the least expense. As part of this, we recommend the government recognises the potential development of a low carbon liquid fuel as an alternative to kerosene. OFTEC is working closely with both industry and government to bring a liquid biofuel to market which could provide a cost effective, practical and futureproof solution for both consumers and policy makers.

"Too much money has been wasted to date on ineffective 'green' schemes. Now is the time to look seriously at the challenge, what consumers actually want and need and how valuable government resources can be channelled to best meet these requirements."

\*Source: Energy Savings Trust

\*\*Source: DEFRA Clean Air Strategy, May 2018

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# Take action now to continue receiving registration news

In the last issue of *Oil Installer*, we wrote about the reviews we have been carrying out at OFTEC to ensure that we are GDPR compliant.

GDPR, or to give it its full name, the General Data Protection Regulation, is designed to ensure that companies and organisations use your personal data appropriately. As part of this process we have identified an area where we need to seek specific consent from all our registered technicians.

Our registration team are always on the lookout for extra services we can offer technicians with the aim of saving you money on your day-to-day business expenditure. Due to GDPR we can no longer presume that you wish to hear from the organisations offering these services, so we have created an 'opt in' on your OFTEC online account. The companies are:

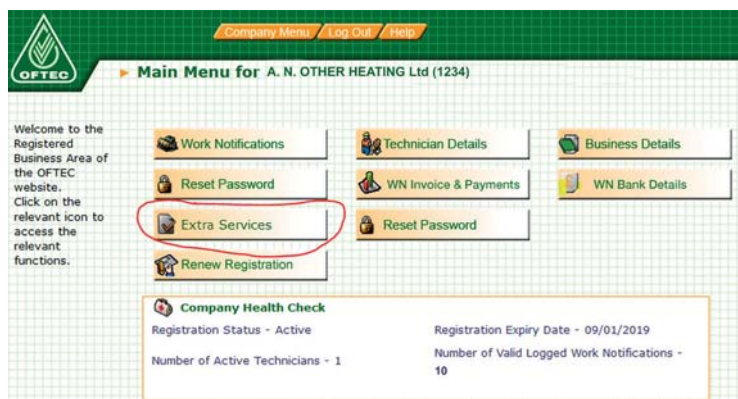
- OFTEC Direct – a division of OFTEC which can supply you with all the control documentation that you need as well as discounted tools and equipment.
- Trade Direct – winner of 'best on-the-tools insurance provider', (trading as OFTEC Insurance Services), which offers discounted business and public liability insurance to OFTEC registered technicians.
- The Fuel Card People who can offer discounted fuel for your works vehicles.

In order to continue hearing from these organisations you will need to follow these steps: visit [www.ofteconline.com](http://www.ofteconline.com)

- Log into your account
- Click on 'Extra Services'
- Click on the opt-in buttons

You can unsubscribe at any time from OFTEC Direct communications, however, to unsubscribe from one of our recommended third-party partners, you will need to contact them directly.

If we introduce additional partners and deals we will announce this in an e-news or future editions of *Oil Installer*.



# Thank goodness for insurance!

One of the rules of OFTEC registration is that all businesses have sufficient insurance cover and we thought it was high time we looked at why this is so important.

OFTEC does not specify which insurer businesses should use, but many choose to take advantage of the discounted policies available through OFTEC Insurance Services. It is important that the policy you decide on is appropriate for your particular business activities.

Obviously, the details of individual claims are completely confidential and remain between the policy holder and the insurer. However, OFTEC Insurance Services have been able to give us some information on the type and cause of several recent claims where they have had to pay out sums of between £30,000 and £250,000 for incidents on domestic properties, as they felt this would be useful for technicians.

## Escape of oil

It is perhaps not surprising that all sizeable recent claims relate to oil leaks. The fact that cleaning up a leak can be a complex task means the size of a claim can easily reach six figures. So, let's take a look at a few recent claims:

- The oil supply pipework was incorrectly installed to a new oil tank and leaked oil into the customer's garden.
- The technician failed to correctly re-attach the filter bowl when replacing an oil filter whilst servicing an oil boiler resulting in contaminated ground
- The filter assembly was incorrectly fitted to the supply pipe and caused a leak
- Failure to adequately cap off a disconnected supply pipe has caused an escape of oil.

What's significant about these claims is that many were avoidable and, as making a claim will set you back to zero on your no-claims discount, it will mean a higher premium in subsequent years, not to mention the potential damage to your reputation. When you look at the size of the claims, it's easy to see why insurance is so essential – not many businesses could afford the clean up costs of a sizeable oil leak...

[www.oftecinuranceservices.co.uk](http://www.oftecinuranceservices.co.uk)



# OFTEC annual conference

## – mapping out pathways towards decarbonisation

Decarbonisation was a key theme of OFTEC's 2018 annual conference in June, which informed members and guests on the opportunities to reduce emissions from rural homes in support of the government's Clean Growth Strategy.

During the event, OFTEC's CEO, Paul Rose, provided an overview of the current situation and reported on progress made since the launch of OFTEC's two stage strategy to decarbonise off-grid homes 12 months earlier.

OFTEC plans focus on an incentivised programme to upgrade the 400,000 old, inefficient oil boilers still in use across England and Wales. This would provide immediate carbon reduction wins of up to 20% per household and pave the way for a low carbon liquid fuel as soon as it becomes available. OFTEC has lobbied MPs, policy makers and other stakeholders to explain the advantages of this approach and highlight the practical difficulties and potential cost to rural consumers of other decarbonisation options.

### Industry contact group

To share information and coordinate progress, an industry contact group, co-led by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and OFTEC, has been set up and two meetings have taken place. OFTEC, in partnership with leading manufacturers, has also begun performance tests on various low carbon liquid fuel blends and a 100% biofuel, with highly positive results.

Commenting on the current position, OFTEC CEO Paul Rose, said: "The climate change challenge is one we all need to address. OFTEC fully supports government's decarbonisation ambitions and our industry has an excellent track record on delivering innovation. Over the past year OFTEC has been working hard to progress a low carbon liquid fuel solution, which offers a more practical alternative for off-grid homes than the other options currently on the table.

"Now is the time for our industry to unite, step up and act collectively to meet the significant opportunity decarbonisation brings. This means everyone from installers and manufacturers to fuel suppliers and



At the OFTEC annual conference: (left to right) Andrew Robertson, Niall Fay, Richard Vianello, Paul Rose and Dr Ernst-Moritz Bellinghen

refiners playing their part. We need to keep this positive momentum going and deliver a futureproof solution that works for consumers and government alike."

"400,000 old, inefficient oil boilers still in use across England and Wales"

OFTEC was joined at the conference by guest speaker Richard Vianello, renewable heat incentive and heat in buildings deputy director at BEIS. Richard provided a summary of current government thinking on heat policy including the recent 'call for evidence' on the Future Framework for Heat in Buildings, to which OFTEC submitted a detailed response.

Dr Ernst-Moritz Bellinghen, energy policy director of the German Institute for Heating and Oil Technology (IWO) provided an overview of the positive developments in low carbon liquid fuel production.

### Renewable heating solutions

Guests then heard from Andrew Robertson, co-founder of Clean Energy Consultancy Ltd who was involved in OFTEC's successful biofuel project (2008-2011) which delivered a 30% renewable liquid fuel called B30K. Andrew talked through the customer journey when opting for renewable heating solutions such as heat pumps and biomass, highlighting the potential barriers to take up in a retrofit situation whilst emphasising the benefits of switching to a low carbon liquid fuel.

OFTEC chairman, Niall Fay of Grant Engineering, concluded: "The journey to provide decarbonisation solutions continues. Heat pumps have been promoted by many as the answer to low carbon heating for off-grid homes. However, the poor thermal efficiency of rural homes and the widely evidenced failure of the domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) highlights the practical difficulties and prohibitive cost of retrofitting these technologies.

"More cost-effective options must be found and this means a crucial role for low carbon liquid fuels going forward. By drawing together the strengths of our innovative industry, I am confident we will be able to produce an alternative fuel to power off-grid boilers well into the future."

# Share your views with OFTEC – and be in with the chance of winning an iPad!

In this issue of Oil Installer you'll find a short OFTEC questionnaire. Please take a moment to fill it in and return it to OFTEC using the prepaid envelope provided. Alternatively, you can go to: [www.oftec.org/oftec-technician-questionnaire](http://www.oftec.org/oftec-technician-questionnaire) to complete the online version.

It should only take a couple of minutes to complete and, as a thank you for participating, all respondents will be entered into a prize draw to win an iPad worth hundreds of pounds!

Your views are really important to us and we will use them to help us decide on our future direction and the services we provide.

Last time we conducted a survey amongst our technicians we found that a significant number had already, or were considering, diversifying into different heating technologies. This reflected a slow but steady evolution in the heating industry and has had a direct impact on the services OFTEC provides.

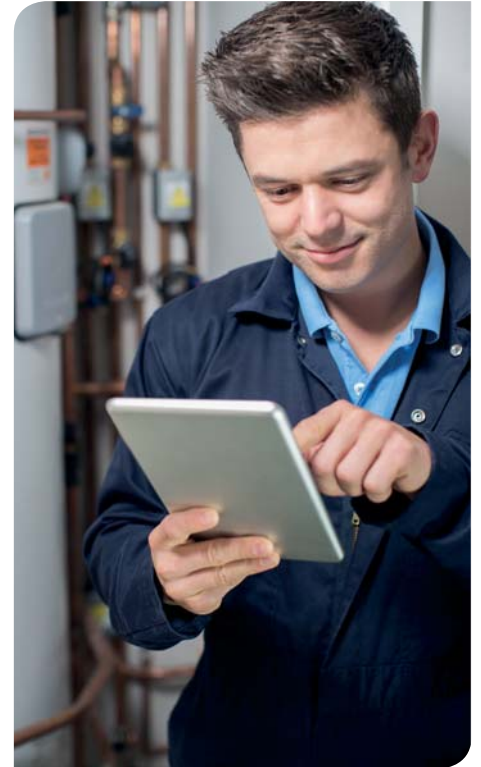
As a result, we have added several additional scopes of registration – including renewables (heat pumps, solar thermal and biomass) and solid fuel. We are interested to know how this situation has changed in the last few years and what percentage of our technicians are now considering

working in more than one field.

Last time around, an overwhelming 87% of respondents reported that they enjoyed reading oil related technical articles – by far the most popular topic for e-news or *Oil Installer*. Heating and plumbing industry articles along with compliance issues were also popular reads and the content of *Oil Installer* and OFTEC's e-News have reflected these preferences, but are they still as popular? The survey is your chance to tell us!

There has been one significant change that is not limited to the heating industry, and that is the explosion of social media as a way of promoting businesses, engaging with customers and keeping up to date with industry information, so we will be fascinated to hear how this has helped or hindered your businesses.

For full terms and conditions of the prize draw visit: [www.oftec.org/prize-draw-terms](http://www.oftec.org/prize-draw-terms)



## Staff changes strengthen the OFTEC inspection team

OFTEC is very pleased to welcome two new inspectors to the team. Nick Booth will be covering South Wales and Barry Hudson is taking on North East England.

Both Nick and Barry look forward to meeting technicians in their respective areas and bring with them a wealth of experience in the industry.

**OFTEC wants to meet...**

**technically minded individuals – see our job advertisement on page 33**



Welcome to the inspection team! Barry Hudson and Nick Booth

# Industry welcomes inclusion of oil in ECO3

The announcement in July from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) that oil boilers will not be totally excluded from the next phase of the Energy Company Obligation scheme (ECO3) has been widely welcomed by the oil heating sector and fuel poverty campaigners.

The decision follows responses by OFTEC and other stakeholders to the ECO3 consultation underlining that removing oil boilers from the scheme would unfairly discriminate against rural households and could lead to even higher levels of fuel poverty.

The new ECO3 legislation, which comes into force on 1 October 2018, will allow limited oil boiler delivery to take place within the broken heating system cap and will also allow the repair of broken oil boilers within the 5% cap for all boiler repairs. This limit only applies to broken boilers not First Time Central Heating (FTCH). Oil boilers will not be allowed under first time central heating (FTCH), district heating, solid walled homes minimum, rural minimum, inefficient heating system replacements or innovation measures.

OFTEC CEO Paul Rose commented: "This is an important win for low income and vulnerable off-grid households. As the key objective of ECO is to provide affordable warmth and help address fuel poverty, it would have been completely contradictory to exclude the repair or replacement of broken oil appliances when oil heating continues to be the cheapest form of heating available to off-grid households".

"This is an important win for low income and vulnerable off-grid households"

The original proposal to remove oil boilers from ECO3 was to align the scheme with the aims of the Clean Growth Strategy, which seeks to reduce carbon emissions. However, while the strategy includes a pledge to end the use of high carbon fossil fuels, decisions on how decarbonisation will be achieved are far from finalised, so many felt that the move to align



ECO was premature. Commentators, including OFTEC, argue that rather than focus on appliances, it makes more sense to decarbonise the fuel.

Paul Rose continued: "We fully support the Clean Growth Strategy vision to phase out carbon intensive fuels from 2020 and believe the best way to achieve this for off-grid homes is the introduction of a low carbon liquid fuel alternative to oil which initial testing indicates, could run on existing oil boilers without modification.

"While the decision to partially retain oil boilers is good news for the industry, concern remains about how ECO is implemented and, in particular, the quality of the actual installations. OFTEC is committed to ensuring that high standards are achieved, and we will be monitoring the situation closely".

Stuart Clements, director at HHIC has also commented on the government announcements saying that: "We are particularly pleased that the government have accepted the HHIC view that it is too early to insist that

"OFTEC is committed to ensuring that high standards are achieved, and we will be monitoring the situation closely"

all new installations are accredited by the Each Home Counts review, especially as it is not actually up and running, nor have the requirements been agreed. We are pleased that the new ECO scheme will be launched without requiring Each Home Counts compliance.

"We look forward to working with BEIS and the industry on delivering this new ECO scheme."

## Clean Growth Strategy update

In parallel to the recent Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) heat in buildings call for evidence, an 'industry contact group' has been set up, co-led by OFTEC and BEIS. The group is made up of representatives from BEIS and industry, including the oil refining, downstream oil distribution, product manufacturing and installation sectors.

The main purpose of the group is to provide a forum to share information and coordinate progress towards achieving a transition away from the use of high carbon fossil fuels such as kerosene. BEIS hosted the first meeting of the group during May and a second meeting took place at the end of July. The group is expected to meet four times annually for at least the next two years.

Outputs from the meetings are hosted on the gov.uk website. To help the process, comments and feedback on the work of the group are welcomed. To view the work, visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/off-gas-grid-industry-contact-group>

The purpose of the first meeting was to agree governance and the terms of reference for the group. A presentation was also delivered by BEIS and discussion was invited, but no new information came forward regarding the ambition of BEIS to reduce carbon from the oil heating sector.

The second meeting in July included a presentation by BEIS and then discussion on the submissions made to the 'heat in buildings call for evidence'.

BEIS maintain that they do not have an agenda other than to meet UK climate change target commitments and they are open to any solutions for reducing carbon from heating, so long as they can be delivered, are sustainable, cost effective for consumers and meet the end goal of zero carbon heating by 2050.

## Is it time all properties had a minimum efficiency standard? asks Worcester Bosch

Worcester Bosch has welcomed the arrival of the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) for privately rented properties in England and Wales, but suggests that owner-occupied properties should also be included.

Martyn Bridges, director of technical communication and product management at Worcester Bosch, says: "Minimum efficiency standards for rented properties will go a long way towards reducing carbon emissions, but this only scratches the surface.

"Owner-occupied homes form the majority of our housing stock, yet they remain largely unregulated. Certificates demonstrating efficiency are only required when the house is due to be sold. Furthermore, England and Wales have a high number of



properties that were built before 1960, many of which will have poor energy efficiency. If we want to get serious about our carbon emissions, we need to develop minimum energy efficiency standards that apply to all types of property, whether rented, social or owner-occupied." [www.Worcester-bosch.co.uk](http://www.Worcester-bosch.co.uk)

## EOGB calls on government to recognise innovation in oil heating

Prior to announcing that oil has now been included in ECO3\*, burner manufacturer, EOGB Energy Products was instrumental in urging the government not to exclude oil from this latest stage of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme.

Highlighting the ongoing innovation in the oil heating sector, EOGB pointed out that proposed changes to ECO, which aims to help low income households reduce their energy bills through energy efficiency measures, would see oil-heated households unable to repair or replace an old, faulty or broken boiler with a new oil appliance.

EOGB stated that the proposals discriminated against some of the most vulnerable rural households who needed access to the cheapest form of heating, leaving them at a significant financial disadvantage compared to those on mains gas.

"We strongly believed that the proposal to remove oil was premature and short-sighted, especially when the oil heating sector is brimming with new technology," explained Martin Cooke, technical director at EOGB.

"For example, at EOGB we've

developed the Sapphire blue flame oil burner which can deliver excellent fuel economy and could help lift people out of fuel poverty. The Sapphire is the industry's only fully-modulating low NOx burner, and not only satisfies the 2018 required standards set by the Energy Related Products (ERP) Directive, but also meets lower 2022 requirements well ahead of time.

"This high efficiency burner is also fully integrated with *open therm* technology which can be connected to a range of advanced in-home controls to further drive up efficiency and offers a gateway to smart interactive systems previously not available on oil-fired installations.

"The Sapphire burner has also been successfully tested on HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil), one of the potential biofuels OFTEC is investigating as part of its ongoing work with industry and government to develop a low carbon liquid fuel to directly replace kerosene, as well as fatty acid methyl ester (FAME) blended fuels," added Martin.

[www.eogb.co.uk](http://www.eogb.co.uk)

\*The inclusion of oil in ECO3 was announced on 19th July, 2018

Oil Installer Autumn 2018

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\* Only available in GB

# Minister officially opens Grant UK's new facilities

Claire Perry, member of parliament and minister of state for energy and clean growth, visited Grant UK's headquarters in Devizes, Wiltshire, recently to officially open the new on-site showroom and meeting suite.



Left to right, Niall Fay, director; Paul Wakefield, UK managing director; Claire Perry MP; and Stephen Grant, director

Grant Engineering welcomed customers, suppliers and staff to their HQ for the official opening of the facilities. Claire Perry, MP for the Devizes Constituency, was the lead guest and formally opened the new premises.

"As the local MP and a local resident, I am proud to be on the Hopton Industrial Estate to open Grant UK's new premises," she told fellow guests. "Thanks to companies like Grant UK and their innovative products which bring down emissions and improve the way that people heat their homes, the UK is leading the way in cutting carbon emissions."

Paul Wakefield, Grant UK's managing director, addressed the guests at the event. "Grant UK moved to Devizes in 2002," commented Paul. "Today, we have 76 employees and the site has continued to develop to accommodate our expanding product portfolio, including Grant's growing renewable offerings from air source heat pumps through to innovative hybrid technologies.

"We are very pleased to welcome Claire Perry to open the new facilities which marks the beginning of the next chapter

in Grant UK's history. There are several exciting projects and developments waiting in the wings here at Grant and we look forward to unveiling these later in the year."

The new development, which was designed and built using local businesses and was completed in January, took less than a year and has increased the size of the storage facilities and offices by 40%, an expansion which will enable Grant UK to enhance the level of service it delivers to customers.

Grant UK's latest development commenced in the summer of 2017 and involved the demolition of a derelict building adjacent to the existing offices and warehouse. The site now welcomes extensive new warehouse with an adjoining showroom and meeting suites.

To complement the new facility, Grant UK has taken the opportunity to install a state-of-the-art racking system in both the new and existing warehouses which has doubled the storage capacity of the site. More than 4,000 oil boilers are now stocked on-site with additional warehouse space being allocated for the storage of renewable products and a growing range of spares. Adjacent to the new warehouse is a new showroom which is home to a selection of Grant's heating products.

Above the showroom there is a new meeting suite which can accommodate up to fourteen attendees which incorporates a smart screen and conference call facilities. In addition to Grant UK's own use, it is hoped that their merchant customers will also use the new premises to host their own regional events.

[www.grantuk.com](http://www.grantuk.com)

# George Clarke becomes Ecodan brand ambassador

Mitsubishi Electric has announced an association with TV presenter, architect, lecturer and writer, George Clarke, to help promote Ecodan air source heat pumps.

Best known for the Channel 4 programmes *George Clarke's Amazing Spaces*, *The Home Show* and *Restoration Man*, George Clarke is a passionate advocate of design excellence and high levels of quality in the construction industry. In addition to his TV work, George is creative director of *George Clarke+ Partners* and has set up the charity, *Ministry of Building Innovation*

and Education (MOBIE) to inspire new generations into the building profession to "fundamentally transform" the way we think about, design and construct homes and bridge the skills gap.

Mr Clarke will help promote renewable heating and write a monthly column on the company's blogsite, [TheHub.mitsubishielectric.co.uk](http://TheHub.mitsubishielectric.co.uk), which covers a diverse range of informative and topics around energy use in buildings.

"We know we need to build a lot of homes each year to address the serious housing shortage but we also need to make

sure that we build quality homes and they need to be built right across the country," comments George Clarke. "The way we design, build, heat, power and recycle our homes needs to change and change quickly and renewable heating is an important part of our future.

"I'm therefore delighted to associate myself with the market-leading brand of heat pumps which are built here in the UK and which can help reduce energy bills and lower emissions for almost any home."

[www.ecodan.co.uk](http://www.ecodan.co.uk)



TV presenter, architect, lecturer and writer, George Clarke,

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# Committee's off-grid homes ambition "is flawed"...

The Committee on Climate Change's (CCC) ambition to use heat pumps as a way of lowering the heating emissions of homes off mains gas is flawed, according to a recent analysis of Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings.

Responding to the launch of the committee's 2018 progress report to parliament, Neil Schofield, head of government affairs at Worcester Bosch, argues that the push for heat pumps to be prioritised is in need of a "reality check".

Neil commented: "One of the main issues with the Committee on Climate Change's recommendations is that they are informed by carbon performance alone, and not by practicality or cost. We really need a reality check, as the figures we've seen suggest that heat pumps simply aren't suitable for an overwhelming majority of homes."

Worcester Bosch's close examination of EPC figures published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government found that less than 12% of the 640,536 properties without access to the mains gas network have an EPC rated C or above. This leaves over 550,000 properties without sufficient insulation for a heat pump installation.

The government's Clean Growth Strategy has been widely criticised for its suggestion that oil boilers are to be phased out, with many claiming that renewable alternatives are simply too complicated and expensive.

## A vital role...

With a heat pump working at a lower temperature than a boiler, insulation plays a vital role in allowing a property to be heated sufficiently. The characteristics of off mains gas properties with an energy rating of D or below, will therefore generally be unsuitable for a heat pump installation.

Neil added: "The heating industry has long held doubts over the government's plans for those in off-mains gas areas, but these numbers really do emphasise just how flawed that ambition is, and how impractical heat pumps are as a truly viable alternative to an oil boiler. We are in full agreement that heating needs to be decarbonised but need to remember that it's the fuel that carries the carbon, not the boiler."

"All the evidence suggests that the best way for us to decarbonise heat from rural homes is to use reduced carbon fuel alternatives. Turning to fuels such as bio-kerosene, biopropane, or even hydrogenated vegetable oil (HVO), would allow us to continue to rely on the boilers that so many homeowners are familiar with; focusing our efforts on replacing old, inefficient oil boilers with new, high-efficiency condensing models."

[www.worcester-bosch.co.uk](http://www.worcester-bosch.co.uk)



Neil Schofield, head of government affairs at Worcester Bosch

# MP visits high-tech burner facility

Huntingdon MP Jonathan Djanogly visited St Neots-based burner manufacturer EOGB Energy Products Ltd recently to view the latest innovation in off-grid heating technology.

Mr Djanogly was welcomed to EOGB by managing director Paul Barritt and technical director Martin Cooke, where he received a tour of the facilities and learnt about the company's new blue flame domestic oil burner, Sapphire, which is due to be in production later this year.

During his visit, Mr Djanogly also officially opened EOGB's recently developed R&D facility. The new space, double the original size, enables engineers to test several burners and boilers on long-term cyclic tests and allows for sophisticated NOx emissions and smart controls testing for new generation equipment.

Jonathan Djanogly MP said: "It was a pleasure to visit EOGB and to see the positive innovation which is happening in this region. As an MP with a largely rural constituency I was very interested in seeing EOGB's developments in off-grid heating technology and hear how these can help to address carbon reduction targets in the UK."

Martin Cooke, technical director at EOGB, said: "We know there's plenty of life left in the oil-fired heating industry and innovation plays a pivotal role in securing its future. We're very grateful to our local MP for visiting EOGB to see our new technology in action and learn about how it can support government plans to decarbonise heating in rural areas."

[www.eogb.co.uk](http://www.eogb.co.uk)



Paul Barritt, Martin Cooke and MP Jonathan Djanogly at EOGB's high-tech burner facility in St Neots



Martin Cooke and Jonathan Djanogly

## Thousands of prizes in Grant UK's biggest ever promotion

Grant UK has launched its biggest ever promotion with thousands of prizes available for installers to win this year. Open to members of its G1 Installer Scheme, the promotion launched on 1st July and runs until 31st December 2018.

Over the course of the promotion, a prize draw will take place every month with fifty G1 installers each winning prizes worth up to £400.

In addition, there are thousands of guaranteed runner-up prizes being given away. Any G1 Installer who registers a qualifying product via the G1 portal or click app will win a monthly prize.

The 50 top prizes consist of three high-value items. Each month, ten Kane 255 Analyser kits, ten Fill and Flush machine packs (which includes the machine, connector and a Grant Mag one filter) and thirty Rhino 3m pipe carriers will be up for grabs. Meanwhile, the runner-up gifts will consist of tool sets, Kane pocket thermometers and Kane voltage testers.

To enter the prize draws, G1 installers simply need to register a Grant oil boiler, air source heat pump, biomass boiler or solar thermal system via the G1 portal or G1 click app between the months of July and December 2018.

"The format of the Big G1 giveaway means that every G1 installer who registers an eligible product during the promotional period will win a prize," explains Anna Wakefield, marketing and communications manager for Grant UK. "With so many prizes available to win every month for six months, the Big G1 giveaway is the largest promotion of its kind from Grant UK."

To learn more about the G1 Scheme, please visit [www.grantuk.com/professional/g1-scheme](http://www.grantuk.com/professional/g1-scheme)

## Danfoss announce competition winner

Danfoss Burner Components have announced that the winner of their recent competition was Paul Paterson from Scotland.

As the top prize winner, Paul went to the Monaco Formula 1 Grand Prix for the weekend with travel and accommodation included.

Mark McElroy from Danfoss stated: "I am sure Paul had a great time and I am pleased to see that a user of our products managed to scoop the main prize."

Danfoss had organised the competition in connection to the



**Congratulations to Paul Paterson of Highland Plumbing and Heating Supplies Ltd who won an exclusive trip to watch the Monaco Grand Prix, courtesy of Danfoss**

launch of new Diamond series oil pumps. More details on the Diamond oil pumps can be found at: [www.diamond.danfoss.com](http://www.diamond.danfoss.com)

## REVEALED: the top ten towns for tool theft

Tradespeople across the UK are losing out on thousands of pounds, as sophisticated thieves target vans for the expensive tools inside, says insurance providers, Simply Business.

The company analysed more 3,000 tool theft claims and discovered that the average tool theft claim has gone up by over 15% from 2016 to 2017 – with 5% of claims over £5,000, and some claims as high as £11,000.

Simply Business covers 135,000 tradespeople in the UK, and has been monitoring a rise in tool theft since 2012. The business found that the average value of theft claims has risen to £1,692.

This reflects the trade community's growing concerns over the safety of their equipment, alongside reports in January from the Office of National Statistics of an 18% rise in vehicle-related thefts overall for 2017.

Simply Business found July was the month with the highest number of tool thefts, going against the typical association of thefts happening in winter. The company says this shows an increase in thieves who use cloned key fobs to steal from vans in broad daylight without attracting attention.

**In their report, Simply Business revealed that the top 10 towns and cities by number of claims in 2017 were: 1. London; 2. Sheffield; 3. Birmingham; 4. Leicester; 5. Chelmsford; 6. Tunbridge Wells; 7. Bristol; 8. Nottingham; 9. Northampton; and 10. Reading.**

Fiona McSwein, chief customer officer at Simply Business, said: "Tool theft remains one of the number one issues affecting hardworking tradespeople across the country. Over the last year, we've seen an average of at least two or three tool theft claims every single day. Stolen tools can be devastating – beyond the financial loss, it takes away tradespeople's ability to carry out their work, leading to loss of time and negatively impacting customer relationships too.

"We hope that by continuing to spotlight this issue, while offering advice and protection, tradespeople can equip themselves with the necessary knowledge to prevent or limit damages from this fast-growing problem."

[www.simplybusiness.co.uk/knowledge/articles/2018/05/tool-theft-in-the-uk-tradespeople-losing-thousands-of-pounds-as-tool-problem-grows/](http://www.simplybusiness.co.uk/knowledge/articles/2018/05/tool-theft-in-the-uk-tradespeople-losing-thousands-of-pounds-as-tool-problem-grows/)

# Grant UK unveils brand new website

Grant UK has launched a new website which incorporates the company's new branding while also delivering greater functionality and product information for visitors.

The start of 2018 has been a busy few months for Grant UK with the expansion of its HQ in Devizes, the rebranding of its G1 installer scheme and now the launch of a brand new website. To reflect the company's fresh restyling and to improve the user-experience for site visitors, Grant has developed a new website which is designed to be an engaging and informative online platform.

The site includes a number of new features. In addition to the modern look, the content has been updated and a more streamlined structure has been introduced to improve site navigation. Pages are now tailored for householders and professionals, helping ensure that each visitor is accessing the product information most relevant to them, says the company.

Grant UK's new website now has a boiler comparison tool which enables visitors to select up to three products, allowing them to compare the key

features of each range. The site also has a product configurator which can assist householders with selecting the right heating solution for their home. Using this product selector, visitors can progress through a series of questions regarding their property's heating needs, the answers to which will enable the configurator to suggest the Grant product range most suitable for their requirements. In addition, a comprehensive glossary and extensive FAQs feature are also new to the site, both of which share technical content and increase the level of support offered to visitors.

## Catalogues and manuals...

Alongside the series of new site functions, some familiar features from Grant UK's previous website have also been transferred across. The product registration form has been simplified, the spares area has been restructured to reflect Grant's printed spares catalogue, the latest brochures and technical manuals for Grant's current product portfolio continue to be available via the downloads hub, and the Grant events diary details the upcoming roadshows and trade events that the sales team are hosting.

"Our new website reflects the

outcome of collaborative thinking between all of the Departments here at Grant UK," writes Anna Wakefield, Grant UK's marketing and corporate communications manager. "We have incorporated changes and new features in response to feedback from the staff who speak to our customers every day. From sales through to technical through to training, Grant UK's new look site has been designed to accommodate the needs our customers. Whether a householder is in the early stages of researching a new heating system or an installer needs to check the availability of product training courses, the new website is designed to assist all."

[www.grantuk.com](http://www.grantuk.com).



# Brussels threat to hard-working van drivers will stifle growth, claims FTA

The call by Brussels bureaucrats for every van in the UK to be fitted with a tachograph is an unfair and excessive exercise in red tape, which will make it even harder for British business people to make a daily living, according to the Freight Transport Association (FTA).

FTA, which has more than 17,000 member organisations operating vans and HGVs, as well as moving freight by air, sea and rail, has reacted angrily to proposals from members of the European Parliament's transport committee to introduce tachograph readers to the cabs of every van currently operating on Britain's roads, as part of the latest draft of the mobility package due to be implemented before the UK leaves the EU in 2019.

According to James Hookham, deputy CEO of FTA, the proposal would have a serious impact on the working lives of those using Britain's four million vans in their daily business:

"Forgetting the cost implications of tachograph installation for so many hard-working British businesses, the introduction of this equipment in the vans sector would be pointless and time consuming.

"Will small businesses really have the time and ability to analyse the necessary data and plan their work around so

many new working time rules? Would governments have the resources to enforce the move? The proposal is simply unenforceable, and a case of MEPs making bad decisions on the fly."

Van operators are already facing increasing pressure due to the introduction of clean air zones around the country later this year, which could penalise operators with all but the very newest vehicles, and rising inflationary pressure and the continued high price of fuel duty payable on diesel. In the latest draft of the EU's mobility package, currently making its way through the European parliament, operators of vans (commercial vehicles between 2.4 and 3.5 tonnes) would be required to fit and operate a tachograph, as HGVs are required to do at present.

"Vans are now central to our daily lives, with next day deliveries a given for households and business," continues Mr Hookham. "Introducing a pointless measure like tachographs for van operators will not benefit our small and medium sized businesses but strangle them with red tape, at a time when they should be being encouraged to flourish and expand."

[www.fta.co.uk](http://www.fta.co.uk)



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# Gas installers in the dark about Boiler Plus

According to a new survey by Logic4training, 57% of gas installers\* have little or no knowledge of the Boiler Plus legislation and how it will affect them. Brought in to improve efficiency in domestic gas heating systems, the scheme came into force on 6th April and heating engineers should now be working to it.

Amongst the survey respondents, opinion was evenly split as to the benefits of the new scheme for consumers and installers, and around half felt they were equipped to take on the work that the new requirements would demand, which includes ensuring timers and room thermostats are installed with all heating systems going forward.

Many of the measures outlined in Boiler Plus would be suitable to install with oil boilers and would help keep running costs down for customers, but it is not a statutory requirement.

Mark Krull, from Logic4training, said: "The government has stipulated the addition of various measures to improve the energy efficiency of domestic heating systems and engineers will be responsible for delivering these.

"However, it appears that the general sense of confusion about the scheme has led to a feeling of negativity, which is masking the real potential.

"Boiler Plus represents a great opportunity for installers and their customers will reap the benefit of more energy efficient heating that has less environmental impact and saves money on fuel bills."

\*Survey of 184 respondents, running from November 2017 to April 2018.

[www.logic4training.co.uk](http://www.logic4training.co.uk)

# New low NOx brochure from Firebird

The launch of the new Envirogreen low NOx boiler range from Firebird follows a three year research and development programme to produce an affordable yet technologically advanced replacement for the traditional yellow-flame boiler.

Featuring a low NOx burner for Firebird by European burner experts ELCO, the new range complies with the stringent limits on flue gas emissions which come into force on September 26th.

Boasting technological superiority and outstanding performance, the Firebird Envirogreen boiler range is easily installed, commissioned and serviced using a single allen key. The plug and play burner, which requires only two settings for pump and air pressure makes for easy installation. To ensure the highest level of efficiency is achieved by the burner, the CO2 level is factory-set at optimum 12.5%.

"With an easily operated Firebird digital control box and a simple diagnostic system, installation really couldn't be more straightforward," says the company.

"Offering unbeatable reliability, the highly efficient Envirogreen boiler range includes models for internal and external applications in a variety of outputs. Backed by PCDB listed performance data, the Envirogreen boiler looks set to become the first choice for installers and homeowners alike – and all without any associated price premium."

Firebird specialise in providing a total heating package solution which includes oil-fired boilers, air source heat pumps, biomass boilers and solar thermal systems.

[www.firebird.uk.com](http://www.firebird.uk.com)



# Grant UK expands spares operation

Grant UK has expanded its spares operation, supplying spares to customers throughout England, Scotland and Wales.

Thousands of spare parts are kept in stock, comprising a full range of Riello items, general oil and Grant specific product spares, including renewables.

With business development manager, Mike Toms, overseeing spares sales on the road, the expansion also coincides with the enhancement of its HQ and storage facilities in Devizes, Wiltshire. The new warehouse facilities and the investment in the Devizes HQ, means that Grant UK can now hold three times its boiler stockholding than before the expansion.

"The market for spares is proving highly successful for us," explains Anna Wakefield, marketing and communications manager for Grant UK. "Our ability to hold significant amounts of spares in stock means installers can be assured that their needs are met very quickly."

[www.grantuk.com](http://www.grantuk.com)



# #WhyGrant

These are just 4 of our 63 market leading oil condensing boilers that are low NOx compliant for September 2018...



LOW NO<sub>x</sub>  
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VortexBlue Combi 26



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That's why.



# Grant UK expands hot water cylinder range

Grant UK is introducing new models to its Wave cylinder range. The addition of six new cylinders along with a buffer and volumiser, will increase the choice of complementary heating products available from Grant.

Grant UK is launching two new products which are compatible with their Wave cylinder range, including a 50ltr buffer tank and a 30ltr volumiser. The buffer tank, which allows for different configurations of the flow and return to and from the heat source and system, maintains a constant flow rate from the boiler or heat pump helping to maximise its efficiency. It also includes a 3kW back-up immersion element and 'dry' thermostat pocket.

The volumiser unit ensures that an inverter type heat pump, for example, can accurately balance the modulation functions of the fan, compressors and circulating pump, reducing the risk of faults and start/stop cycles.

Grant's high performance fast recovery cylinder range will also include new models which incorporate a buffer

tank. Three of these new units, available in 200ltr, 250ltr and 300ltr variants, combine the cylinder with the 50ltr buffer tank at their base, reducing the need for separate tanks and reducing the overall footprint required.

A further three pre-plumbed cylinders are also joining the range. These models, which include the 200ltr, 250ltr and 300ltr cylinders with the combined 50ltr buffer tank, are pre-plumbed and include a domestic hot water zone valve, two space heat zone valves, a wiring centre, dual thermostat, mains water inlet group and tundish.

Grant's high performance cylinder range has been designed to complement both oil and renewable heat sources. While the cylinders specifically match Grant's Aeron<sup>3</sup> air source heat pumps, they are also compatible with and complement other heating products including the award-winning Vortex and VortexBlue oil boilers.

Incorporating a larger primary coil,



Grant's high performance cylinders provide quicker heat transfer to help deliver maximum system efficiency. The models consist of single and twin coil indirect variants available in sizes from 125ltr up to 400ltr, including an ErP 'A' rated single coil indirect 200ltr cylinder which features higher levels of insulation designed to maintain the stored temperature for longer.

[www.grantuk.com](http://www.grantuk.com).

## ELCO Burners enters UK market with new low NOx model

To mark its entry into the UK domestic oil market, ELCO Burners has launched the new EKL series – an exclusive range of low NOx monoblock burners with outputs from 12kW to 100kW.

Suitable for kerosene, gasoil and bio-oil blends, the new model features a wide range of features, making it a suitable choice for high efficiency domestic oil boilers.

All EKL burners are designed to minimise their environmental impact, thanks to a unique combustion head design that significantly reduces NOx levels to below 120mg/kWh – complying with the Energy-related Products Directive (ErP) 2018, says the company. The EKL burner is also available in a blue flame model (EKLBLUE), which already complies with the most stringent emission targets expected in 2022.

Featuring a compact design, the EKL burner is compatible with even the smallest condensing oil boilers, stresses ELCO Burners.

Commenting on the launch, Giuliano Conticini, managing director at ELCO Burners, said: "We have over 90 years' experience in combustion technology, which allows us to continually develop products for the future. The new EKL burner is a perfect example of our engineering expertise – and we are sure that the oil heating market will be impressed with the new model's performance levels, as well as its clever, installer-friendly design."

[www.elco-burners.com](http://www.elco-burners.com)



## Oil safety devices from Anglo Nordic

For 60 years, Anglo Nordic has built a reputation for sourcing and developing high quality products, components and tools for oil and gas fitters throughout the UK and Ireland. One of the company's latest additions to its range is a custom-developed capillary fire valve which, says the company, represents a significant step forward in low-cost safety equipment.

The valve, branded Anglo Nordic CFV, is OFTEC approved to the latest standard, and the trip and reset function allows it to be tested regularly in accordance with OFTEC requirements. It is available in 1.5m, 2m, 3m and 6m variants. Suitable for a wide range of oil boilers, the Anglo Nordic fire valve can be specified in 65°C and 90°C variants.

The capillary fire valve is available through Anglo Nordic stockists and retailers around the UK and internationally.

[www.anglo-nordic.com](http://www.anglo-nordic.com)



# Latest additions to Riello's residential oil burners

Riello has developed new model variants of its market leading RDB burners, based on blue flame technology and designed to meet the most stringent standards for NOx emissions in oil-fired residential boilers.



The new models include RDB BG BLU, RDB BX and BT Yellow/BLU, as well as two-stage variants of blue flame models. Riello's two stage operation system with suitable controls increases

the overall efficiency of oil fired heating systems, along with reduced electrical consumption and emissions, making them suitable for high efficiency residential boilers.

RDB BG BLU two-stage burners are suitable for use with kerosene and gasoil, utilising Riello's new BG combustion head design for cleaner combustion. The combination of two-stage operation and low NOx emissions also makes them suitable for condensing and combination oil boilers.

All Riello RDB burners can be used in a balanced flue or conventional flue configuration and are designed for ease of installation and servicing, utilising Riello first-line components.

[www.rielloburners.co.uk](http://www.rielloburners.co.uk)

# Firebird host low NOx roadshows

Firebird hosted a series of low NOx roadshows in July providing essential advice on how to comply with the latest changes to the ErP Directive – formerly the Ecodesign Directive – which comes into force on 26th September.

Presented in conjunction with European burner experts elco, the roadshows included a series of presentations and product demonstrations along with the opportunity for 'hands-on' product training on the new Firebird by ELCO low NOx burner which is featured in the recently launched Envirogreen boiler range. Firebird personnel were on hand to introduce further new product developments and to answer questions.



This latest round of changes, which target NOx emission levels for the first time, will have the biggest impact on the heating industry as traditional yellow-flame oil-fired boilers will no longer comply. This legislation is applicable to all new installations as well as when existing products are replaced. Firebird, however, can offer customers a choice of three low NOx compliant burner options from MHG, ELCO and Riello respectively, all of which exceed the stringent new requirements of the ErP Directive.

The Envirogreen boiler range which features a Firebird by ELCO low NOx burner is easily installed, commissioned and serviced using a single allen key. The range includes models for internal and external applications in a variety of outputs. To ensure the highest level of efficiency is achieved by the burner, the CO2 level is factory-set at optimum 12.5%. Should this need to be adjusted for any reason, the CO2 level settings are printed on the burner casing which acts as a handy reference guide.

[www.firebird.uk.com](http://www.firebird.uk.com)

# Fuel filters – the importance of individual filtration for vaporising appliances



Because the majority of domestic and light commercial fuel storage tanks are supplied with not only one outlet, but also one filter/strainer unit, it is understandable why the importance of individual filtration for vaporising appliances is often overlooked by installers and service technicians alike, says Specific Oil Solutions (SOS).

"A partially blocked filter serving a vaporising appliance (Aga, Rayburn, Esse, Harmony stove, etc.) together with a pressure jet appliance, poses a huge potential safety risk," warns SOS.

As a solution – and to eradicate a potentially fatal explosion when re-lighting the appliance – SOS has developed a multi-outlet filter range to complement the company's successful copyrighted Ultra Compact fuel tank range.

All products incorporate Viton seals, designed for use with not only all of today's fossil fuels but also current bio-fuel blends of gas-oil and potential bio-fuel kerosene or its green replacement – yet to be developed.

"Everything we manufacture at Specific Oil Solutions we endeavour to make future-proof," says the company.

Further information:

[stuartbratt58@icloud.com](mailto:stuartbratt58@icloud.com)

# Teddington upgrades KBB production line and marks 60th anniversary of fire safety valve

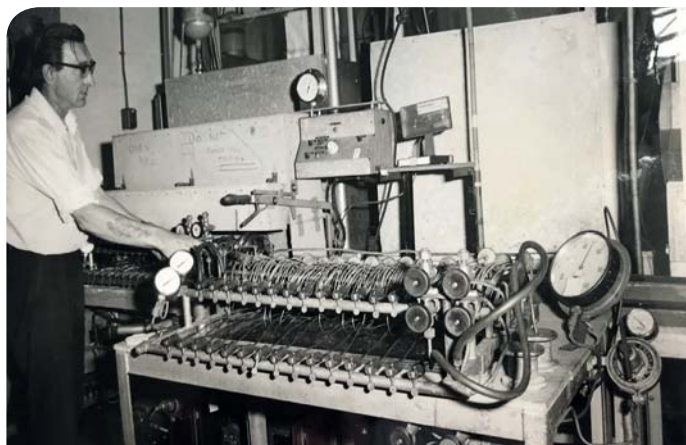
Engineering specialist Teddington has upgraded the assembly line for its KBB fire safety valve which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. The

£10,000 investment has resulted in a 25% increase in production to help meet rising demand.

Orders of the KBB have

increased by 70% in the last three years and sales are expected to rise by a further 5% in the next 12 months – with plans to build a second assembly line later in the year.

the sensor exceeds a set value, protecting properties against the risk of fire. The device is fully OFTEC approved and comes with a three-year warranty.



The KBB semi-automated charging system from early in its production



Teddington managing director James Henderson in the upgraded KBB production line area

Peter Wiltshire, director of Surrey-based trade supplier OH Products, which stocks the KBB, said: "The KBB is the Hoover of the industry. For the product to have such longevity, it stands to reason that Teddington has used every expertise, investment, engineering and procurement tool in their armoury to stay ahead of their competition.

"I've been associated with the KBB since 1967 when it was the only capillary operated fire valve on the market. It is a very reliable device based on very sound engineering practices. From its inception, it was designed in such a way that it could not have been bettered. It was fit for purpose from the outset and is still very much in high demand."

The KBB is installed in the oil supply outside a building, with a sensor mounted inside the boiler above the burner. The valve will automatically close if the temperature at

Kenneth Maxwell, Teddington sales manager, said: "The recent investment is part of our continuous commitment to growth and improvement, reflecting our desire to continually provide the best-quality products to our customers.

"After 60 years the KBB is still going strong, with orders continuing to rise. One factor behind the recent market growth has been the low cost of oil compared to alternative off-grid sources such as electricity and LPG. It remains the cheapest fuel to heat people's homes, offering a lower running cost even compared to mains gas."

Teddington is a UK manufacturer based at St Austell, Cornwall. Among other sectors, it specialises in valves and electronic control devices for heating, plumbing and ventilation.

[www.teddingtonsystems.co.uk](http://www.teddingtonsystems.co.uk)

## Diamond day for Anglo Nordic

Anglo Nordic celebrated 60 years of supplying the domestic, commercial and industrial oil and gas trade in June.

The Surrey-based manufacturer and distributor has contributed widely to the industry over the years, with staff sitting on the board of OFTEC, offering in-depth product training at their headquarters, and developing their own products based on their customers' needs.

"I'm most proud of our relationship with our customers – we've always treated them as real people rather than corporations, and that makes the job so much more enjoyable," says sales and service supervisor, Russel Terrett.

The company has long fostered links with the local community, regularly donating to their local community children's home, and director Andy Cottee recently completed the Revolve24 – a 24-hour bike ride in aid of St Clare's Hospice.

"It's an honour to be part of a team filled with such knowledgeable, passionate and dedicated people. The current generation are continuing the spirit and principals that have made Anglo Nordic so great for 60 years, and we're all looking forward to the next 60 years!" says Anglo Nordic director, Andy Cottee.

[www.anglonordic.co.uk](http://www.anglonordic.co.uk)

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HETAS - H001 Introduction to Solid Fuel  
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## Worcester Bosch welcomes revision to EPBD

The addition of mandatory individual room temperature controls to the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) is a welcome validation of best practice for the plumbing and heating industry, according to an industry spokesperson.

The revision requires individual room temperature controls, such as Thermostatic Radiator Valves (TRVs), to be installed during the construction of new buildings, or when boilers are replaced.

Martyn Bridges, director of technical communication and product management at Worcester Bosch, comments: "Thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) are highly effective at improving heating efficiency and comfort in the home. This has long been known by many installers in the UK but has only recently been acknowledged in this legislation despite being overlooked in the Boiler Plus scheme. Many installers already opt for this type of temperature control as a common method of improving energy efficiency in the home, with the 2014 English Housing Survey Energy Report revealing that 76% of homes with gas central heating had either a full system or at least a partial system of TRVs.

### Energy efficiency and cost savings...

"Using individual heating controls in conjunction with room thermostats offers individual room comfort while still providing a boiler interlock from the room thermostat sited in a location that should offer an overall mean temperature of the house,"

Martyn says. "TRVs are far more sophisticated, creating heating zones and supplying a controlled level of heating to suit individual rooms. By making their installation a legal requirement, thousands more homes across the UK can now benefit from the energy efficiency and cost savings that they provide."

According to the EPBD, individual room controls need only be installed 'where technically, economically and functionally feasible'. "Given that TRVs are fairly inexpensive, have a fast payback period and, in most cases, can be easily installed onto existing radiators, I can foresee them becoming a requirement for most installations moving forwards," Martyn says.

The benefits of TRVs are enhanced further when paired with smart controls, which allow users to easily monitor and control a household's heating and hot water. The new Bosch EasyControl, for example, can control heating and hot water from any external location with a web connection, via an app, to provide maximum comfort and energy efficiency. When paired with two or more smart TRVs, the control offers a 5% uplift in efficiency, thus meeting the conditions of the Energy-related Products (ErP) Directive.

"Although TRVs are not an entirely new solution for most installers, now is the time to ensure that they are not overlooked," Martyn says. "By making it a legal requirement, this not only validates best practice, but also ensures that TRVs are considered for all new and replacement boiler scenarios."

[www.worcester-bosch.co.uk](http://www.worcester-bosch.co.uk)



## New circular saw range...

Hitachi Power Tools has added two new heavy-duty 185mm circular saws to its power tool range. The C7SB3 has an aluminium base with scale, comfortable soft grip handle and comes with an 18 tooth TCT blade and guide as standard. The C7UR also has a powerful motor and aluminium base and comes with a 55mm bevel, adjustable metal cut line guide and a wrench stored on its body.



Both tools feature external brush caps for ease of maintenance and a unique 90° angle setting system to make precise 90° cuts. They include a dust extraction adapter, wrench and carrying case as standard and a three-year warranty when registered online,

[www.hitachi-powertools.co.uk](http://www.hitachi-powertools.co.uk)

## ... and a new spanner



Pliers specialists Knipex has launched the Raptor Multiple Slip Joint Spanner, designed for metric and imperial nuts and screws with widths from 10 to 32 mm (3/8" up to 1 1/4").

The Raptor Multiple Slip Joint Spanner (product number 87 41 250), combines a comfortable push-button adjustment on the workpiece with the function of an all-purpose tightening tool. The powerful closing gripping jaws can manage to grip rusty or thick-coated bolted connections, even when there are no surfaces that can be reliably gripped by a conventional spanner.

[www.knipex.com](http://www.knipex.com)

## Channel Island tank fire



Firefighters on the island of Alderney in the Channel Islands were called to tackle an oil tank blaze recently. Fire took hold of the oil tank adjacent to a single storey residential property close to the island's airport. Both of Alderney's volunteer fire trucks arrived to tackle the fire, which took around 45 minutes to fully extinguish. It is thought that the fire resulted from a fault in the boiler which was next to the oil tank outside the property. No one was hurt in the blaze. This tank fire highlights the importance of using an OFTEC registered technician to carry out regular servicing and checks on boilers and tanks. Making sure that installations comply with current building regulations and industry codes of practice can help ensure that incidents like this do not have wider implications such as spreading to adjacent buildings.

## New Tuffa oil tank installed by Craggs Energy

Tuffa UK has partnered with Craggs Energy to supply a domestic heating oil tank to a remote rural location in Yorkshire.

The home owners had their heating oil supplied to a single skin tank by Craggs Energy. As the tank was quite old, and the legal position regarding leaks and spills places the responsibility for safe storage squarely with the property and tank owner, Craggs's tanker driver advised the couple that they could be at risk of a potentially expensive spill if the old tank split or developed a leak.

The owners requested a Craggs Energy home visit which entailed a site inspection and free report. Craggs recommended replacing the old single skin tank with a new Tuffa bundled fire-protected oil tank.

Tuffa has developed a unique

patented fire-protected material that is integrally factory-fitted to the tank, with either 30 or 60 minutes fire-protection available. In addition to the safety aspect, a further benefit is that the tank can be located adjacent to a property or within a garage or outbuilding without the need for additional brick work or firewall. All Tuffa fire-protected tanks are delivered with Local Authority Building Control (LABC) certification.

Craggs opted to collect the 2,500 litre tank direct from Tuffa's factory. The tank is small and light enough to be transported on a flat-bed truck.

Craggs drained the existing tank into an intermediate bulk container before replacing it with the new 2500 litre bundled fire-protected oil tank. They re-filled the new tank with the stored oil and an additional oil supply leaving the couple with a full tank of fuel.

The entire process was completed in a day with the new tank being safer and cleaner, providing the couple with the peace of mind that they would not be facing a potentially expensive clean up bill after a spill. Many insurance companies no longer cover policy holders for a spill from a single skin tank or a tank more than 15 years old.

The owners were delighted with the tank and the service from Craggs Energy. "Craggs Energy provided a great service for us," they said. "They advised us of the best options and we're very pleased with the Tuffa bundled fire-protected oil tank. The change over was an efficient process and they did a really tidy, professional job. We're delighted that the tank was replaced and re-fuelled in the same day with minimum inconvenience to us."

[www.tuffa.co.uk](http://www.tuffa.co.uk)



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# The future of liquid fuels in Ireland

By David Blevings, OFTEC Ireland Manager

There are around 1.2million oil-fired homes in Ireland and the market and legislative framework is different to that operating in GB. While we have a building control requirement in Northern Ireland (if a structural alteration takes place such as a new low-level flue) there is no requirement for any notification in the Republic and limited input from local enforcement in both jurisdictions in replacement boiler scenarios.

These varying requirements present challenges and, at the same time, opportunities in the different regions! There appears to be a low-cost mentality amongst both the installer fraternity and consumers alike and, without enforcement, jobs are often completed without building control inspection/application/approval in Northern Ireland and with no, or minimal legislative input in ROI.

This means the price for an installation of a replacement boiler or tank in Ireland is driven by a largely unregulated market where the lowest price usually wins. This is good news initially for the consumer but without power flushing (magnetic cleansing), installation of zoning and controls, filter etc., they are probably NOT getting an energy efficient product that will save them money and give them a 'hassle free' heating experience.

OFTEC frequently receives calls from frustrated householders where installers have had to go back to their homes three or four times after a new boiler has been installed, due to radiators not heating, pumps seizing, water leaking, burners failing, or other common, avoidable problems. The most common

reason for these calls is that the system and tank was not cleaned properly before the new boiler was installed – the cheap option is to remove the old boiler and slot in the new one – simple!

There is more reason than ever for our industry to step up and offer a first class, compliant installation experience to retain liquid fuel customers. We now face a real challenge because the governments are beginning to push consumers towards low carbon heating. If your customer has a bad experience with liquid fuel (install/service or running cost) they are ripe for switching to an alternative heating or cooking system. If this happens, you are unlikely to see them return to liquid fuel.

As we are all aware, the driving force behind this push to a low carbon society is the requirement that, by 2050, the EU should cut greenhouse gas emissions to 80% below 1990 levels. This is now shaping up into policy – the UK government is consulting on how to achieve its 'Clean Growth Strategy' (CGS) which makes it clear that a low carbon future is required and fossil fuelled boilers are not acceptable post 2035.

As the climate change agenda is applicable to both the UK and Ireland, it is likely that the devolved regions will seek to implement policies that reflect those in the CGS.

Ireland's government vision for a transition to low carbon heat is set out in 'Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030' and is supported by the National Mitigation Plan. Key features of the plan are driven by a significant increase in energy efficiency and greater use of renewables and electrification of heating. This paper envisages an 85% reduction in the use of oil, as well as

the complete phasing out of coal and peat for heating by 2030!

## So, what is the answer?

The government must meet its targets or face substantial fines. If the liquid fuel sector is to survive, we need to offer a low carbon fuel for consumers and this is something the industry must address through innovation, creation and diversification.

The search for a replacement is already underway and we may adopt solutions that are currently being developed for use in the road transport and aviation industry (which is the other main user of kerosene).

The changeover to low carbon heating will take time, but there is a clear line in the sand and the oil heating industry needs to step up to the mark – with appliance and ancillary manufacturers, installers, service technicians and OFTEC all having a role to play. Without innovation, a new liquid fuel or blend, better installation standards and increased customer satisfaction with their liquid fuelled appliances, our industry could face a serious decline during the 2020s.

So, let's embrace the change. Air source heat pumps cannot deliver the domestic heat load for all homes in Ireland – so there is a clear need for a liquid fuel and a golden opportunity for us to be part of the solution. Consumers like liquid fuel... they are used to it and will not be prepared to spend thousands of pounds/euros on the retrospective insulation measures (especially solid wall) needed to use heat pumps.

Liquid fuel clearly has a role to play in the future energy mix, so let's all work together to make it a success.

---

## Dublin Council on board with OFTEC registration

OFTEC recently gave a presentation to a group of council staff and inspectorate responsible for inspecting and maintaining rented accommodation in the Dublin City Council area.

The format was a CPD event and the participants received information on CO awareness and what an OFTEC technician does at a service inspection. Sean McBride briefed the attendees on what documentation to look for (boiler passport/CD10/11/TI133) and the benefits of using registered technicians.

This is the first of several sessions with local councils in Ireland following the release of guidelines for housing authorities, published in 2017, on the implementation of minimum standards in rented accommodation that specify using OFTEC registered technicians for the servicing of oil fired appliances.

For further information on the housing guidelines see: <https://bit.ly/2LNwRoy>



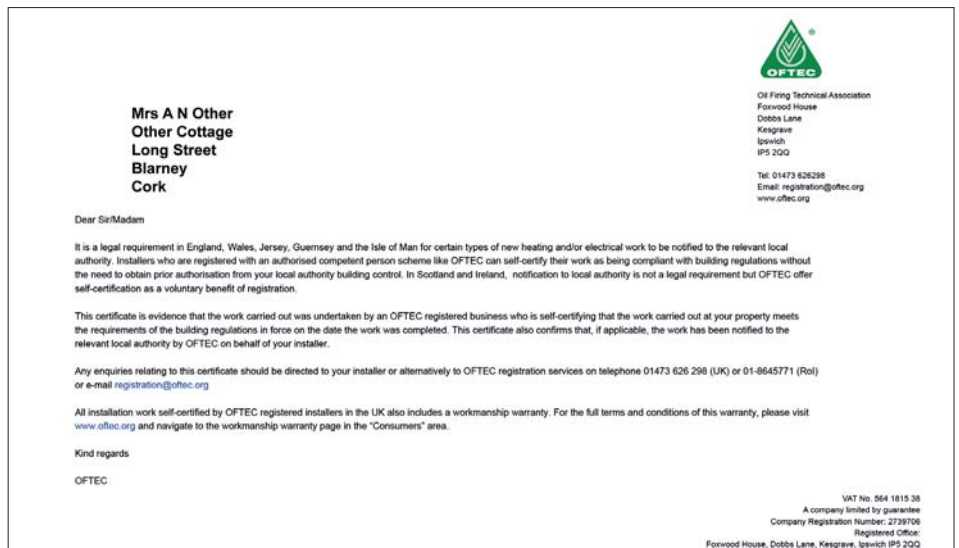
# Notify your installation...

Competent Persons Scheme (CPS) registration allows you to self-certify your own installation work in accordance with building regulations in applicable regions of the UK.

This has proved very beneficial for technicians and consumers in England and Wales who use this as an alternative to notifying the local authority building control office when a new installation or addition to a heating system has been carried out.

OFTEC is keen to expand its notification scheme into Ireland and Scotland and this is now operational for registered technicians in these regions. While CPS has not yet been introduced in Scotland or Ireland, we think that many customers will welcome the notification that their new heating system has been installed to local building regulations.

In Northern Ireland, retrospective building control permission is often sought by a solicitor dealing with a house sale that has had a new boiler installed (requiring structural alteration) and is notifiable under



local building regulations. This can be time consuming and costly for the applicant and can hold up the sales transaction.

In the Republic, there is no notification requirement, but consumers will welcome a certificate to show that their new installation has been installed correctly to local requirements and could assist house sale/rental as appropriate. It will also be a good sales tool benefit for proactive installers.

To see how to use the notification system please go to: <https://bit.ly/2A6izxT>



## Job opportunities at OFTEC

### Technical Supervisor / Manager

Are you an experienced supervisor or manager with a good knowledge of the heating industry? We are looking for someone to lead the day to day support we provide to the liquid fuel heating industry and OFTEC's registered technicians. This includes managing our technical team, responding to enquiries, producing technical publications and bulletins, and delivering our consultancy service. Good organisational skills are vital, and an in-depth knowledge of heating would be an advantage, preferably with some hands-on experience. Travel to external venues and meetings may be required.

### Technical Officer

If you're a good communicator, enjoy helping people and have a passion for technology, you could be the person we're looking for. We need someone to join the busy team who deal with technical enquiries from OFTEC's registered technicians, consumers and other external stakeholders. You'll need to be able to interpret technical standards and relay information accurately to enquirers. You will also assist in the production of technical publications, bulletins and the delivery of our consultancy services. Heating industry knowledge and experience would be an advantage. Some travel to external venues and meetings may be required.

### The closing date for both roles is 31st August 2018

Both roles are based at our office in Ipswich, 37½ hours p/w with a competitive salary based on experience. Other benefits include a workplace pension, healthcare cash plan and free staff parking. OFTEC is committed to staff development and further training is available, depending on experience. To request an application form and job description for either role, please contact Andrew Peirson (Office and HR Manager) on 01473 618 552 or [apeirson@oftec.org](mailto:apeirson@oftec.org)

**OFTEC represents and promotes the domestic off-grid heating and cooking industry in the UK and Republic of Ireland and is the provider of a competent persons scheme and trade association. For more information, visit [www.oftec.org](http://www.oftec.org)**

# Taking control... housing association staff get hands-on help with heating and hot water

A recent training course has helped the customer-facing staff at Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (bdht) to ensure that tenants can manage their heating and hot water, without requiring an engineer.

The leading provider of affordable housing in Bromsgrove, bdht, arranged the course for all customer service staff after identifying that boiler-related callouts often stemmed from customer difficulties with the heating's controls.

The housing provider decided to train support staff in understanding common heating or boiler problems and resolving them without the need for an engineer.

"Over the past two years we've spent over £500,000 on improving energy efficiency in our homes, and this has included the installation of around 245 new boilers," says Jeanette Matthews, head of customer delivery at bdht.

"Many of our tenants were not familiar with the controls that came with these boilers and often struggled to set their heating timers correctly, particularly when the clocks changed. This led to a number of costly engineer callouts for relatively straightforward problems."

bdht decided to approach Worcester Bosch, who it has worked with for several years, to train support staff in programming and troubleshooting heating controls so that staff could then pass this information on to the customer and resolve queries quickly and efficiently.

## Solving common problems...

The session was delivered by Stuart Hawsworth, one of five mobile training engineers at Worcester Bosch. Using a board equipped with three working heat controls and thermostats, Stuart took participants through the basic functionality of the controls, including setting the time, date, and timer, as well as some common problems.

"bdht is a big user of our boilers," says Stuart. "In the past, we've worked with the trust's gas engineers, training them on every aspect of our boilers, from installation to servicing and breakdowns."

"In training bdht's support staff, our objective has been to help them solve common problems, such as incorrect settings or loss of power supply, without needing the help of an engineer. Not only can they pass this knowledge on to the customer, who can then manage his or her own heating controls, but they also free up the engineer's time for more complex tasks."

Stuart continues: "With the implementation of Boiler Plus, training of this kind is increasingly important as smart controls become more common, both within the social housing sector, and the private sector too."

## Limited information...

bdht staff were split into small groups of three or four people, all of whom were encouraged to use the controls while receiving instructions. Dan Bolsher, customer first assistant at bdht, said: "When a customer calls with a problem, we're often working with limited information. With a solid grounding in the basics, we can diagnose repairs quickly to help customers get their heating going again. If the situation still requires an engineer, we can brief them fully so they can complete the job easily and efficiently."

Claire Chapman, a senior adviser on the customer first team at bdht, adds: "The fact that Stuart from Worcester takes the time to build mock-ups only increases the value of the training we receive. We can practice with the controls and gain a better idea of what we need to do, and how we should advise the customer."

"Training like this gives the staff the confidence to pass this information on to the customer, who can then use it to programme and control his or her heating, without needing to wait for external assistance."

Worcester Bosch offers a mobile training service for all customers, including merchants, local authorities, and business owners. It conducts approximately 1,000 off-site courses each year.

[www.worcester-bosch.co.uk/professional/training/mobile-training](http://www.worcester-bosch.co.uk/professional/training/mobile-training)

# FGA guide launched by Logic4training

Logic4training has launched a new guide to flue gas analysers (FGAs), available to download for free from its website. Developed in conjunction with Anton, the guide contains information on how to make the most of an FGA – from usage in the field, to maintenance and the reduction of paperwork.

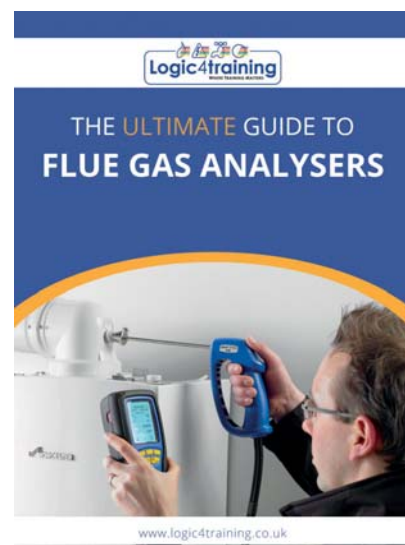
"The Ultimate Guide to Flue Gas Analysers" is a practical, in-depth guide to FGAs and their use, including illustrations and diagrams, with potential problems and their causes highlighted. It includes:

- Understand how to use your FGA during commissioning, servicing, fault-finding and repair
- Learn how to maintain and calibrate your FGA
- Find out how to utilise Bluetooth and online apps to reduce paperwork, such as landlord gas safety reports (LGSR)

Mark Krull, director of Logic4training, said: "We are delighted to have worked with leading FGA manufacturer, Anton, in order to produce this guide – an easy-to-access resource to ensure gas engineers are getting the most out of this essential bit of kit."

"Logic4training is committed to helping installers beyond the classroom and new guide is a great addition to our existing range of free to download material."

[www.logic4training.co.uk/guides](http://www.logic4training.co.uk/guides)





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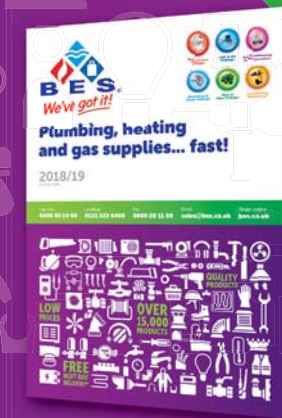
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# Link-up systems – providing maximum flexibility

It is increasingly common for consumers to utilise an oil-fired appliance alongside other heating technologies, such as solid fuel, heat pumps or solar thermal systems. Modern integrated or link-up systems can be used to combine two or more heating technologies in one combined system, providing maximum flexibility to the end user.

Link-up systems range from very basic arrangements that allow two heat sources to raise the temperature of water in a hot water cylinder, through to electronically controlled management systems that allow multiple heat sources to be used simultaneously. Examples include low loss headers, plate heat exchangers and pre-plumbed electronic control panels.

*In this article we will focus on the common methods of utilising a twin coil cylinder, neutral point or thermal store.*

## Twin coil cylinder

This is the most straightforward of the link-up options. An oil-fired appliance is used to heat the water in the cylinder indirectly via one of the coils in a twin coil cylinder. The second coil is connected to another heat source, such as a solid fuel appliance or solar panels for example (see Diagram 1).

In the strictest sense, this is not a link-up system as the two appliances are on separate systems and heat the same cylinder via separate coils. This system can be expanded to include further heat sources by using a triple coil cylinder. Installers must ensure that the cylinder coils are suitable for gravity circulation where needed.

## Neutral point

The use of a neutral point manifold or vessel offers a neat solution to the problems of linking fully pumped oil-fired appliances with solid fuel appliances on gravity circulation (see Diagram 2).

Neutral point vessels have a comparatively large volume that fixes the neutral point within the system. Both appliances are only connected through this vessel which means that pumped and gravity circuits are hydraulically decoupled and will not affect each other. In other words, the pumped circuit from the oil boiler will not encourage or discourage flow

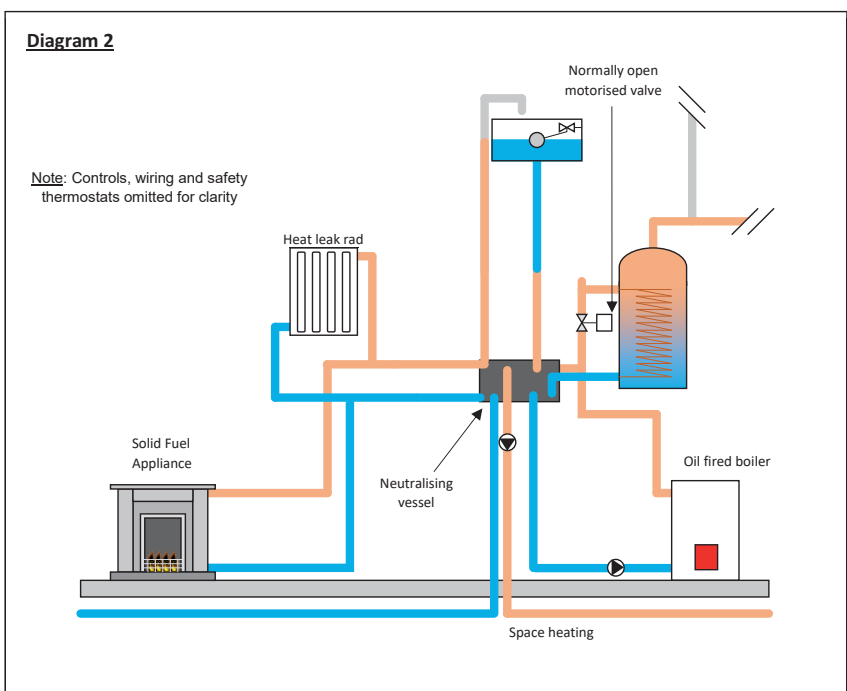
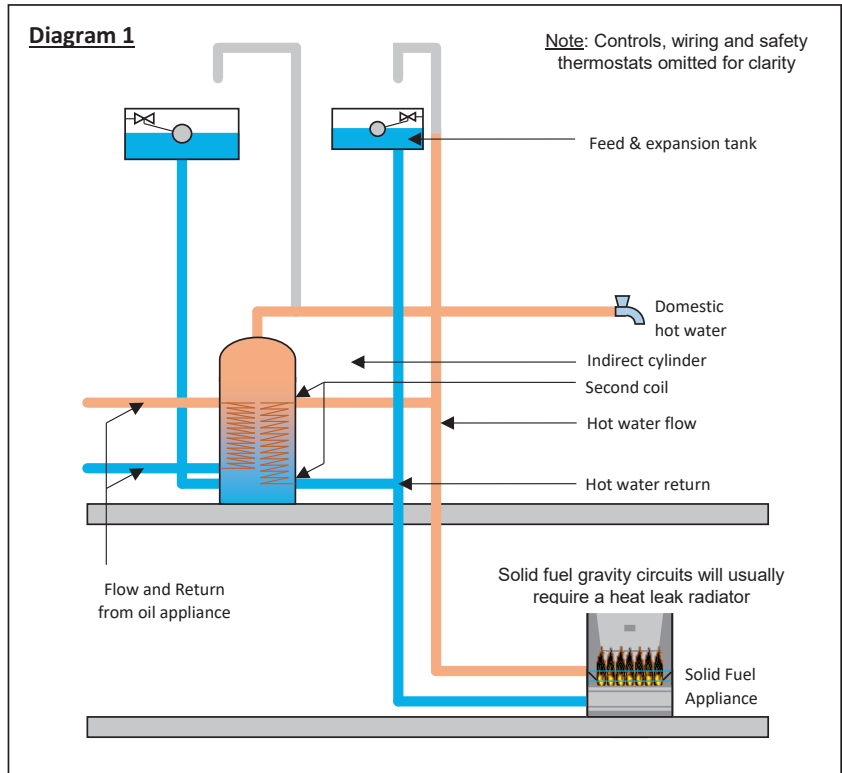
through the solid fuel appliance's gravity circuit.

A further benefit of this link-up system is that only one feed and expansion tank is required, because the cold feed and open vent are both connected to the system at the neutralising chamber. Also, this system can be used to provide both heating and hot water from the appliances. Very careful consideration needs to

be given to the design of pipework, controls and safety thermostats on this type of system.

## Thermal store

The thermal store system takes the principle of the neutralising vessel one step further by providing considerable heat storage as well as neutralisation of water circulation (see Diagram 3).



A thermal store is a large tank (typically 200 to 300 L) very much like a hot water cylinder, but instead of containing domestic hot water it is filled with primary (system) water. Usually, both the appliances and heating circuits are connected directly rather than via a coil (with the exception of solar panels). The thermal store acts as the neutral point of the system and also stores some or all of the heat produced for later use.

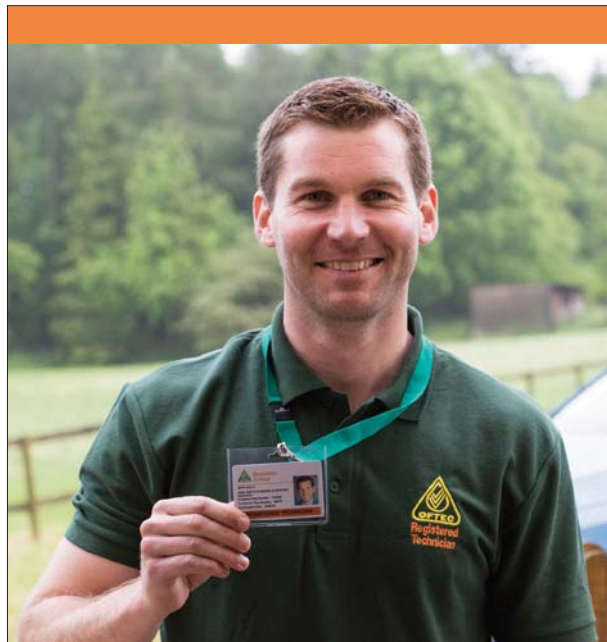
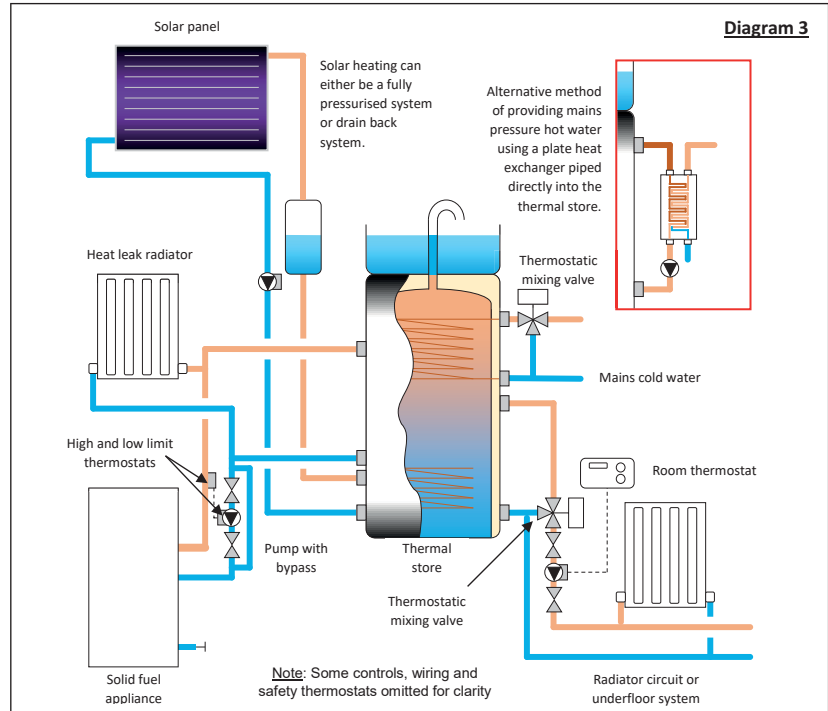
The water in a thermal store is usually stored at around 80°C. This water is circulated to the heat emitters via thermostatic mixing valves. For a radiator circuit, the water would typically be mixed down to 60°C whilst for underfloor systems this could be as low as 35°C. By storing water at a higher temperature, the charge of heat lasts longer.

Domestic hot water can be supplied at mains pressure via a secondary coil inside the store or through a separate plate heat exchanger.

Unless permitted by the appliance and/or cylinder manufacturer's installation instructions, unvented hot water storage cylinders should not be heated by a solid fuel heating appliance either directly or indirectly (via a sealed primary circuit).

As well as checking the requirements of regional building regulations, it is essential that you should reference the installation instructions of every appliance that you propose to link up. Some manufacturers may not permit their appliance to be used in this way or may have very specific instructions on how this should be done.

OFTEC would recommend that installers only work on heating technologies for which they have training, competence and Competent Person Scheme registration scopes. For further information, speak to OFTEC registration services about our solid fuel, solar thermal and heat pump registration scopes.



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# NOx emissions? Not a problem!

Are you getting in a knot about NOx? Ahead of the introduction of new NOx emission limits in September, here is OFTEC's guide to what the changes mean for technicians.

## What is NOx?

NOx or Nitrogen Oxides are a family of poisonous, highly reactive gases. Within this family are nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and nitric oxide (NO). These gases form when fuel is burned at high temperatures, such as in vehicle and marine engines, power stations and heating appliances. There is evidence that high levels of NOx can inflame the airways in our lungs and, over a long period of time, affect how well our lungs work. People with asthma are particularly affected. NOx gases are strong oxidizing agents and play a major role in the atmospheric reactions with volatile organic compounds (VOC) that produce ozone (smog) on hot summer days.

## Why is there so much talk about NOx in the trade press?

New requirements on flue gas emissions, covered by the Energy

Related Products (ErP) Directive, state that from 26th September 2018, NOx emissions from oil fired boilers/water heaters with outputs up to and including 400 kW must not exceed 120mg/kWh. Oil fired warm air heaters with outputs up to and including 1 MW should not exceed 180 mg/kWh. For some appliances this is a dramatic reduction.

## Do the regulations apply to manufacturers or technicians?

Manufacturers. From the 26th September 2018 it will not be permitted to put into the supply chain appliances that do not meet the new NOx emissions limits.

## Are manufacturers ready?

Yes. Following burner and appliance product development, all OFTEC appliance manufacturer members have confirmed they are ready to

comply with the September 2018 deadline. In fact, the oil heating industry is ahead of the game. A number of low NOx burners and boilers have already been developed that will meet the September 2018 requirements, but are also likely to comply with the more severe NOx level limits expected in 2022.

## How will these changes affect me?

Manufacturers' instructions will almost certainly change. It is therefore imperative that you carefully check manufacturers' installation, commissioning and servicing instructions, even for appliance types that you may have worked on numerous times previously. This particularly applies when trying to align combustion readings with the parameters detailed by the manufacturer.

Continued on page 39



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## Will I need to purchase a flue gas analyser that measures NOx?

At the time of *Oil Installer* going to press, OFTEC has not heard of any impending requirement for technicians to measure and record NOx readings whilst undertaking flue gas analysis. NOx emissions are influenced by the nitrogen content of the fuel/air mixture and are controlled as part of the boiler design. NOx emissions cannot be influenced by a technician who has already achieved best combustion performance. However, not being in possession of a crystal ball, OFTEC cannot state that this will never be required. If, in the future, appliance manufacturers make this a requirement, then technicians will need to equip themselves with flue gas analysers that measure NOx.

## Is it safe to move an existing fuel storage tank?

It is likely that at some stage you will get asked to move a customer's existing fuel storage tank to a new location; possibly because:

- they are extending their property
- it does not comply with local building regulations in its current position
- they simply dislike the current location.

OFTEC considers the relocation of an existing fuel storage tank as a new installation. For this reason, its new location should comply with current regional requirements in relation to fire and environmental protection.

## Have you considered the age of the tank and how the tank is currently supported?

Whilst it may seem like a cost-effective idea to move an existing tank, its structural integrity could be affected, which could lead to expensive consequences if the tank fails. For example, if an existing tank has not been adequately supported, a move is likely to subject it to new stresses on weakened areas.

It is also possible that the tank has become weaker with age, even if correctly installed and supported. By reinstalling elsewhere, you could be putting it under additional stress which could further impact on its structural integrity.

In summary, if you are considering moving an existing fuel storage tank approaching the end of its design life (typically 20 years maximum), or a tank that has previously been poorly supported, there is an increased risk of it failing after the move. We recommend that you review the condition of the tank extremely carefully, paying close attention to how it has been installed and assess whether it is wise to move it.

While a move may be cheaper in the short term, it may be better for your customer to consider a completely new tank installation, rather than reusing their existing tank and risk a costly failure.

# Tanktop Best Practice!

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# Make time for a cuppa and read the manual...

Which non-conformities most frequently scupper technicians during an OFTEC inspection visit? The surprising answer is that the most common problems identified by OFTEC's field inspection team are not related to non-compliance with regional building regulations, but are due to technicians failing to follow equipment manufacturers' installation instructions (EMI's).

Okay, let's face it, many of us rarely read an instruction manual for anything. After all, we all think we know what we're doing and just think of all the fun with flat-packed furniture we'd have missed out on! However, a small amount of time spent familiarising yourself with the EMI's supplied with the appliance you're installing would easily eradicate many of the most common inspection non-conformities. This will also benefit your customer as their new appliance is likely to run with fewer problems.

## Premature failures...

Whilst failure to follow the below areas of the EMI's will not generally lead to an unsafe or dangerous situation, fire valves shutting off unnecessarily, premature failures of burner oil pumps or frozen condensate pipes will certainly inconvenience your customer, probably just when they need their heating most. And, if the manufacturer's warranty is invalidated due to failure to follow their instructions, your customer may look to recover the cost of any repair/remedial works from you.

**Three key areas where EMI's often vary from one manufacturer to another and should always be checked are:**

### Fire valves

- Shut off temperature rating – don't assume that one size fits all! Whilst a 65°C shut off temperature remains suitable for many appliances; some manufacturers call for a shut off temperature of 85°C or higher to avoid the possibility of nuisance shut offs.
- Valve position for externally located appliances. Some appliance manufacturers cite a minimum distance that the valve must be located from the appliance casing.

### Oil supply system

- The provision of an isolation valve(s) for servicing and a fuel filter of 70 µm, or less, close to the boiler. These will typically be installed externally and immediately before the position of the remote acting fire valve.
- The minimum head required for a single pipe gravity fed system. This is usually measured from the tank outlet to the burner oil pump.



- The maximum pipe run for a single pipe gravity fed system based on the available head.
- If one or other of the manufacturers' requirements above cannot be met, a double pipe sub-gravity feed system or single pipe suction lift with de-aerator system will need to be installed. Failure to install either of these types of supply systems can lead to problems. It may also invalidate any future warranty claim should the burner oil pump prematurely fail.

### Condensate disposal

- The acceptable points of discharge for the disposal of condensate may be specified and depending on the discharge point, an external air break may be required.
- The minimum diameter required for internally and externally installed pipework may vary. Typically this will be 21.5mm (internally) and 32mm (externally).
- If external pipework is to be installed, some manufacturers call for the pipe diameter to be increased to 32mm inside the property before it passes through the external wall to outside.
- In addition to an increased pipe diameter; some manufacturers also require external pipework to be insulated using suitable waterproof and weather resistant insulation to prevent freezing.

So next time you're installing an appliance, after taking delivery and checking for any damaged or missing items, grab yourself a cup of tea and take five minutes to familiarise yourself with the manufacturers specific requirements for the key areas of the EMI's detailed above. A bit of hydration never goes amiss and you might do yourself, and your customer a big favour too...

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## Revised guidance issued

Following the publication of BS 5410-2:2018, OFTEC has released a series of technical book updates.

The updates are free to download and print from the technical resources section of [www.oftec.org](http://www.oftec.org) or alternatively, printed update packs are available from OFTEC Direct at a cost of £5.00 per book.

Additionally, OFTEC has released a new technical notice (Technical Notice 023), advising technicians to proceed with caution when considering the use of fireboard as a suitable fire protection barrier.



# Tanks and flues share top spot in the rogues' gallery!

Not surprisingly, oil storage tanks crop up yet again in this edition's Gallery section. But this time, sharing equal prominence, are some dodgy flues... badly located, badly fitted – and downright dangerous! Such was the poor standard of workmanship that the OFTEC registered technician who spotted the problems suspects that the installations were carried out by do-it-yourselfer, rather than a trained oil engineer. Let's hope he's right!!

Keep your photographs coming so that we can share your experiences with all our readers! Send your pictures, together with a brief description of your business and where you came across the subject of your snaps, to [jane@oilinstaller.co.uk](mailto:jane@oilinstaller.co.uk)



Registered OFTEC technician, Adrian Smith, proprietor of Adrian Smith Plumbing & Heating Services in Great Shefford, Berkshire, encountered this dodgy flue when he was called to investigate a problem with UFH.

Adrian explains: "I came across this flue that resulted from an extension being built over the terminal that was then taken 90 degrees through the wall. It's not a suitable flue outright, with the combustion air being sucked in from a sealed living space. Not to mention the terminal too close to the door, lack of terminal guard, fire valve location (it was upside down!) and PRV discharge! I notified the customer!

"I suspect it was done by DIY builders – not an oil engineer!"



Oil boiler technician Paul Hamblin of Hungerford, Berkshire, was on a routine service near Newbury when he was confronted with a series of storage tank calamities. "I was doing a routine service requested by the letting agent on behalf of the landlord. It was a first-time visit for me, and obviously the tank inspection is part of the job," explains Paul.

"What a surprise I had! The tank itself was okay... some foliage too near it, but nothing drastic. I have seen worse.

"I took the attached pictures of the domestic bunded oil tank showing that the bund has been compromised towards the top as it has been drilled through to allow an earth bond to be attached to the metal part of the filler cap. Reason unknown!!

"It was not possible to visibly trace the earth wire back to see where the other end is attached i.e. consumer unit or copper oil line in boiler casing. I replaced the braided oil line within the boiler casing. The date mark on that was 2008!! There was no isolation valve so I had to isolate the oil flow at the tank. All was documented!"

# Pricing page

**The cost of oil heating has increased significantly in the last year, so this quarter we'll look more broadly at the issues that affect the kerosene price today and in the future.**

As a fossil fuel-based industry, the price of crude oil is obviously key. After a year of sustained price increases, which saw Brent crude rise from a low of around \$45 a barrel in June 2017 to a recent high of over \$80 in May 2018, the upward trend appears to have finally ended and prices have even fallen back slightly. This has impacted on the price of kerosene, pushing up the typical

annual cost by well over 30% in the UK, and nearer 50% in RoI. Taken in isolation this is pretty bad news, but fortunately the cost of competing fuels such as electricity and LPG has also risen slightly, so while the impact on our customers is significant and the price gap has narrowed, the alternatives are still relatively unattractive.

It's worth remembering that the cost of a barrel of Brent crude oil has always been highly volatile. It's highest ever price was \$145 in 2008 and as recently as 2014 it was regularly over \$100 a barrel, so the current price rise, while unwelcome, is far from unusual or extreme.

Looking ahead, the global economic and political situation is volatile and uncertain, with question marks about both the supply of crude oil and world demand. These opposing pressures may cancel each other out, keeping prices roughly where they are now for the rest of the year. However, in the UK, Brexit may have an impact on future fuel prices and a lot will depend on what kind of exit deal we are able to negotiate. A positive outcome to the negotiations would help to keep prices stable, while a failure to achieve a good deal, or worse still no deal at all, may see the value of the Pound fall further and increase the cost of a wide range of imported goods, including oil and gas.

## Comparative space and water heating costs for a three bedroom house

### GREAT BRITAIN

	4-yr avg: July14–July18	July-17	July-18	Price change
Solid Fuel (anthracite grains)	1147	1114	1148	+34
Electricity (storage heaters)	1700	1910	1992	+82
Gas (British Gas - condensing)	1020	967	1006	+39
LPG	1928	1850	1886	+36
LPG (condensing)	1587	1524	1551	+27
Oil	1140	1022	1384	+362
Oil (condensing)	935	840	1133	+293
Wood Pellets	1355	1283	1533	+250
Air Source Heat Pump (radiators)	1537	1681	1751	+70

### NORTHERN IRELAND

	4-yr avg: July14–July18	July-17	July-18	Price change
Solid Fuel (anthracite grains)	990	953	973	+20
Electricity (storage heaters)	1563	1437	1518	+81
Gas (Phoenix Gas - condensing)	939	885	951	+66
LPG	2322	2530	2589	+59
LPG (condensing)	1906	2075	2123	+48
Oil	1088	1022	1359	+337
Oil (condensing)	893	840	1113	+273
Wood Pellets	1121	1098	1144	+46
Air Source Heat Pump (radiators)	1500	1384	1459	+75

### REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

	4-yr avg: July14–July18	July-17	July-18	Price change
Anthracite Peas	1503	1510	1628	+118
Electricity (Urban Night Saver)	2034	1953	2052	+99
Gas (Bord Gais condensing)	1333	1291	1337	+46
LPG	2713	2620	2792	+172
LPG (condensing)	2232	2157	2296	+139
Oil	1586	1228	1858	+630
Oil (condensing)	1298	1008	1519	+511
Wood Pellets	1328	1335	1387	+52
Air Source Heat Pump (radiators)	1787	1718	1806	+88

#### Notes

The tables above are based on quarterly data published by the Sutherland Tables. They show the annual average cost of a range of heating options for a typical pre-1980 three bedroomed semi-detached home with a heat requirement of approximately 16,000 kWh.

Prices are shown in pounds sterling (£) for Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and euros (€) for the Republic of Ireland.

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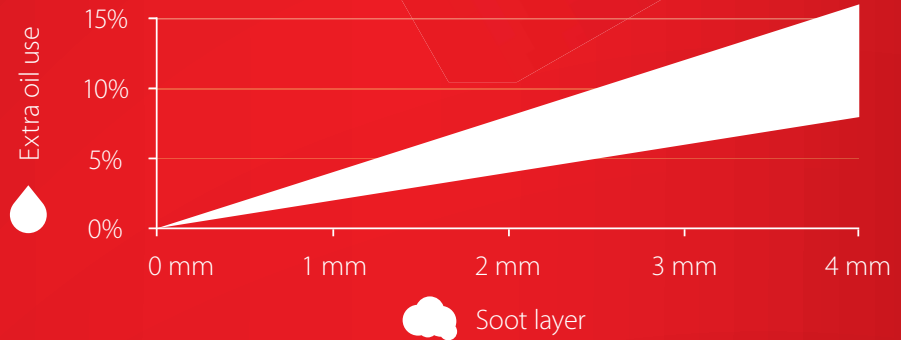


Oil burner maintainance

# Maintainance means reliability

Your oil burner needs the same attention as your car in order to perform at its best. It takes regular cleaning, inspection and servicing to make sure it's in perfect shape and running in a reliable way.

A well-adjusted oil burner is far more efficient and can **save you up to 10% or even more in oil use**. If soot builds up, the oil use will go up with 2-4% per mm soot layer.



To obtain savings and minimize risk the annual **service should include:**



Replacement of oil nozzle



Replacement of main cartridge filter

Save up to  
**10%**  
in oil use  
with an annual  
burner service

Replacement of pump filter



Cleaning and fine tuning



**An annual service** will help ensure:



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**Money savings**



**Minimum pollutions**



**Longer burner lifetime**



**Avoid break downs**



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